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Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Letter dated 4 February 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit the text of the statement by the President of the Republic of Belarus on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the admission of Belarus to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 21 (i).

(Signed) Sergei Ling
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 4 February 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the President of the Republic of Belarus on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the admission of Belarus to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

The decision adopted 10 years ago concerning the accession of the Republic of Belarus to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) opened a new phase in the recent foreign policy history of independent and sovereign Belarus.

The Republic of Belarus, having consciously chosen the path of democratic development, acceded to the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris for a New Europe and other important CSCE documents, and declared its commitment to the ideas and fundamental principles contained in them.

After becoming a full participating State of CSCE, our country became actively involved in efforts to strengthen peace and cooperation on the European continent. Belarus supported the organizational and operational development of CSCE and its transformation into a key regional organization with a comprehensive system of institutions and mechanisms and a sphere of responsibility that stretches from Vancouver to Vladivostok and encompasses all dimensions of security.

Throughout the past 10 years, the Republic of Belarus has put forward initiatives designed to strengthen the authority and role of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in crisis prevention, conflict settlement and the post-conflict restoration of peace and trust.

In 1992, on the initiative of the Republic of Belarus, the OSCE Minsk Group was established to settle the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. Belarus — the first country to reject unilaterally the stationing of nuclear weapons in its territory — advocated broadening the sphere of activity of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe by including on its list of priorities the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in Europe. Representatives of Belarus have made an important contribution to strengthening stability and security in the OSCE region by participating in the organization's field missions.

The constructive and responsible approach of Belarus to the drafting and adoption of the most important documents of recent years — the Charter for European Security and the Agreement on Adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (Istanbul, 1999) and the Bucharest decisions on combating terrorism and strengthening political dialogue in OSCE — demonstrates the importance Belarus attaches to participating in this pan-European organization and making it the basis of the European security architecture in the twenty-first century.

Belarus welcomes the current intensive efforts of the Chairman-in-Office to resolve the recent problems in the work of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, strengthen political dialogue and take into account the opinions of all participating States, and to move towards comprehensive consideration of all the most topical issues in pan-European development.

The OSCE participating States today face a host of tasks and challenges which no single State will be able to address on its own. It is vital to strengthen our cooperation in the quest for joint responses to the challenges presented by terrorism, organized crime, illegal migration and the illegal proliferation of weapons. We are particularly interested in further strengthening the organization's economic and ecological potential.

Given the active approach being taken by the Chairman-in-Office, the Republic of Belarus expects that specific steps will also be taken this year to reform OSCE and increase its effectiveness, so that it can finally become a fully fledged international organization which is a subject of international law.

Belarus will continue consistently to support the strengthening of all the components of comprehensive and indivisible security in the OSCE area, in full accordance with the spirit of the Helsinki Final Act and other basic OSCE documents, and will remain a reliable and responsible partner in pan-European dialogue, committed to universal values.

Minsk, 1 February 2002